United Nations A/60/PV.31

General Assembly
Sixtieth session

Official Records

31st plenary meeting
Thursday, 13 October 2005, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Eliasson ..... (Sweden)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda items 66 and 47

New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

(a) New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

Report of the Secretary-General (A/60/178)

Note by the Secretary-General (A/60/85)

(b) Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General (A/60/182)

2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa

Note by the Secretary-General (A/60/208)

The President: I regret the change of meeting place. It seems as if nature is playing a role here, sending a message about the Capital Master Plan.

Today the General Assembly will consider agenda items 66 and 47 in a joint debate.

The meeting of the General Assembly has been called to provide an opportunity for debate on two matters, on the 2001-2010 Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, particularly in Africa, and on progress in implementation and international support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

Our deliberations are based on a number of helpful papers from the Secretary-General, including the report of his Advisory Panel on International Support for NEPAD (*see A/60/85*). I particularly commend the Panel for rooting its work in the realities of the lives of the poor. We should all bear in mind that "Success cannot be measured in the number of consultations, meetings and plans alone" and "The lives of people must change as a result of African and international support for NEPAD".

On malaria, there has been welcome progress in recent years. First of all, the number of treated bed nets distributed has increased massively during the past three years, and tenfold in more than a dozen African countries. That is a good example of aid working and of its making a very concrete difference in the lives of the poor. Secondly, the first African factory producing long-lasting bed nets opened in late 2004. Thirdly, since 2001, 53 countries have begun using more effective malaria drugs, with support from World Health Organization (WHO) and donors. In that connection, there is a worldwide effort under way to ensure that there are sufficient amounts of the raw material available to meet growing demand. Fourthly,

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there has been increased political momentum behind the international fight against malaria, not least because of leadership shown by African leaders. Lastly, there have been a number of recent pledges to increase bilateral and multilateral funding to tackle malaria.

But the tragic fact remains that every 30 seconds a child somewhere in Africa dies of malaria. Malaria remains the biggest killer of children under age five in Africa. All this happens despite the fact that we know how to prevent and treat malaria, and we know how to do it cheaply. So, if we are to lift this unnecessary and unacceptable burden of disease from the world's poorest, we need a strong partnership backed up by renewed financial and political commitment.

Turning to NEPAD, I believe 2005 has been a year of increased momentum for the cause of development, and for Africa in particular. This was evident at the world summit, where leader after leader from all over the world stressed the importance of tackling poverty.

As a result of the various reports, commissions and summits throughout the year, real progress has been made. We now have a clearer sense than ever before of what needs to be done to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, and we must keep up that momentum. But I also know that, particularly in much of sub-Saharan Africa, there must be a rapid acceleration of efforts if the goals are to be met.

We have seen some welcome new commitments, both from developing countries and donors. The Group of Eight Summit in Gleneagles made substantial commitments on aid volumes and debt. African Union leaders (AU), at their Summit meeting in Sirte, Libya, made strong commitments on governance and on creating an environment conducive to investment and development.

Thanks in no small part to the African-owned agenda that NEPAD lays out, Africa is creating for itself a time of opportunity, the like of which we have not seen for a generation. In 1998, 14 African countries were in a state of armed conflict or strife. Now the number engaged in major conflict is down to three — still three too many, of course. The African Union is taking an ever more active role in peace and security. And there is no better signal of Africa's determination to take responsibility for its development than the news that 23 African countries have signed up with the African Peer Review Mechanism, with AU leaders in Sirte urging all member States to join as quickly as possible.

Having made this progress, there is now a fourfold challenge before us, in my view.

First, we must ensure that the commitments made this year are implemented. Implementation is a crucial word to the credibility of both this Organization and the work we do in this Organization. I was pleased to learn that the Africa Partnership Forum meeting in London on 4 and 5 October 2005 agreed that there should be one Joint Action Plan covering both donor and African commitments, and that progress on the Action Plan would be reviewed each year beginning in October 2006.

Secondly, the world must ensure that the final challenge of 2005 is accomplished — namely, achieving an outcome in the trade talks in Hong Kong in December, which will advance the cause of development in Africa and beyond.

Thirdly, we must ensure that the momentum generated this year is maintained and built upon. All those who have a role to play — African Governments and countries, regional organizations, donors, the international financial institutions, civil society, the private sector — must step up to the challenge. Here at the United Nations, it simply will not do for us to say that we have now "done development" at the World Summit, and that we will come back to it at another Review in five years' time. We must keep development high on the General Assembly's agenda this year.

A top priority is to get the Peacebuilding Commission established by the end of the year, so that the international community is able to give those African States emerging from conflict the support they deserve. You will also know that the President of the Economic and Social Council, Ambassador Akram, has important plans on development, not least the special event to be held later this month on the food crisis in Africa.

Fourthly, you, as members of the General Assembly, must ensure that the world hears the full story about what is happening in Africa. Yes, there are still enormous unmet needs. HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis, alongside malaria, continue to take a massive, deadly toll. There are too many Africans whose lives are blighted by poverty, insecurity or a

lack of human dignity. But — and I stress this — we must also avoid a sense of helplessness and despair about Africa. The more you can get the message out about the many good things you are doing to tackle corruption, improve governance, attract investment and help your people lift themselves out of poverty, the stronger the chorus will be that demands that you get the support you need and deserve.

We will now move on to the list of speakers. We have an improvised podium here in this chamber. Speakers will have to adapt the microphone to their height.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): On behalf of the African Group, I wish to express our deep appreciation to the Secretary-General for his third consolidated report on progress in the implementation of and international support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), as contained in document A/60/178, and his report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, in document A/60/182. The two issues are inextricably linked because no meaningful development can take place in a situation of violent conflict and insecurity. Therefore, while we welcome the fact that, at present, only three African countries are engaged in major conflict, we continue to be deeply disturbed by the lingering civil strife in other parts of Africa, which are causing death and destruction and laying waste vast swathes of productive land on the continent. It is no source of joy to us that "most African countries enjoy relatively stable political conditions" (*A/60/182, para.* 4) under democratic Governments.

Indeed, we want all African countries to enjoy firmly rooted democratic governance under the rule of law, which alone can create the conditions conducive to the renaissance to which the continent has committed itself through the NEPAD initiative. The African Group believes that the many challenges and threats facing our continent demand a wider engagement from the international community as a whole.

Africa recognizes that the consolidation of development will be hampered by internecine conflicts that decimate populations, plunder precious natural resources and destroy already limited infrastructure. Consequently, the urgency to consolidate the necessary conditions for durable peace and development throughout the African continent cannot be overstated. As noted in the Secretary-General's report under reference, the two major threats to durable peace and sustainable development in Africa are internal conflict including civil war, genocide and other large-scale atrocities — and economic and social threats, including poverty, infectious diseases and environmental degradation.

With regard to internal conflicts and other large-scale atrocities, the report of the Secretary-General is quite accurate in pointing out some of the crucial challenges facing the security environment in Africa, such as illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, mercenaries, the illegal exploitation of natural resources, youth unemployment, the problem of refugees, and diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

The challenges are also enormous in maintaining international attention in areas where peace remains fragile unless sustained through a multidimensional approach to peace, thus minimizing the risk of relapse into conflict. The African Group believes that the time is ripe for a structured cooperation between the African Union (AU) and the United Nations in order to assist the ongoing efforts to develop an African-led agenda on post-conflict peacebuilding, addressing the nexus between security, development and the humanitarian dimensions of peace in Africa.

To that end, we note with satisfaction the strengthening of the capacity of the AU to intervene and mediate in conflicts on the continent through the establishment of the African Peace Facility, funded initially by the European Union, to support AU peace operations and capacity-building. We also welcome the provision by the G-8 countries of direct bilateral technical assistance and financial support to the AU, as well as to some subregional organizations, such as the Economic Community of West African States and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, to support their conflict-prevention and crisis-management efforts.

Those laudable initiatives have been endorsed in the 2005 summit outcome document. We firmly call for the urgent and comprehensive implementation by all sides of the commitments made on conflict prevention, peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding and reconstruction. It is our belief that the early operationalization of the peacebuilding commission

would be helpful in post-conflict reconstruction in Africa.

The elimination of economic and social threats to durable peace and sustainable development in Africa is at the very heart of the NEPAD initiative. As stated in the Secretary-General's report, "NEPAD aims to generate broad-based and equitable growth that allows Africa to reduce poverty and integrate better into the world economy" (*A/60/178, para. 5*) — a task that is complex and painstaking.

The complex and painstaking nature of the process involved in turning NEPAD objectives into practical achievements comes through quite clearly in the discussion of the various sectors of the NEPAD programme in the report of the Secretary-General. African countries have made progress through the Short-term Action Plan in infrastructure development, covering facilitation studies and investment and capacity-building projects.

It is evident from the current report that lack of technical capacity is a major impediment that requires urgent, time-bound remedial measures to accelerate the capacity-building programmes and thereby move the infrastructure-building agenda forward. In that connection, we call for the speedy implementation of the commitment undertaken by the international community in the 2005 summit outcome document to support the building of an international infrastructure consortium involving the African Union, the World Bank and the African Development Bank, with NEPAD as the main framework, to facilitate public and private infrastructure investment in Africa.

We welcome the launching of the NEPAD e-schools demonstration project, which is a critical element of the NEPAD e-schools initiative, and call for the provision of more resources to expand the initiative to more African countries.

We share the view expressed in the report that most of the elements of disease-based programmes in Africa need a functional health service for effective delivery. The lack of skilled human resources in the health sector in Africa is a very vexed question. On the one hand, African Governments, constrained by limited resources, are unable to train adequate health workers, while on the other, the few that have been trained with scarce resources are leaving in large numbers to seek more lucrative conditions abroad, thereby worsening an already bad situation. It is thus imperative to support the health systems in Africa.

It is encouraging to note that the articulation of the road map for the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme was the most important development during the year. In that regard, we note with appreciation the decision by our development partners, especially the United States of America through its Initiative to End Hunger in Africa, to allocate $47 million for 2005, in support of the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. Our gratitude also goes to the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom and the International Fund for Agricultural Development for other initiatives in support of the Programme.

African countries have committed themselves to the promotion of democracy and good governance, including economic governance, as espoused by the African leaders, including in the African Peer Review Mechanism. We note that 23 countries have signed on to the African Peer Review Mechanism, and the Peer Review Panel has completed country reviews for Ghana and Rwanda and presented its report to the African Peer Review Forum in Abuja for discussion. We commend all countries and institutions that have contributed to the African Peer Review Mechanism trust fund and call on the international community to continue providing financial resources and technical assistance to the process. The completion of the review process for countries that have signed up will give added impetus to the African Peer Review Mechanism and may encourage other countries wishing to do so to join the process.

The international community made an unequivocal commitment in the 2005 summit outcome document (resolution 60/1) to provide coherent support for NEPAD programmes, including by mobilizing internal and external financial resources and by facilitating approval of such programmes by the multilateral financial institutions. We hope that these commitments will be speedily implemented in support of the continent's development.

Concerning official development assistance (ODA), we warmly welcome the recent decisions taken by our partners, including the G-8 and the European Union, in support of Africa's development efforts,

including commitments that will lead to an increase in ODA to Africa of $25 billion per year by 2010, as part of the drive to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.

We wish, however, to re-emphasize the fact that declared pledges by themselves will not effect the desired changes. Delivery of the pledged support through new and additional resources in a sustained, effective and timely manner is crucial in order not to hinder the pace of implementation of development priorities in Africa. We further call for the implementation of the internationally agreed target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income (GNI) to developing countries, with 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of GNI to the least developed countries.

It is important that developed countries ensure aid predictability and aid effectiveness through the implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. Coordination of delivery of aid consistent with national priorities will be essential for Africa if it is to meet the MDGs by 2015. The same applies to budgetary support to facilitate the achievement of the MDGs.

In the 2005 summit outcome document, the international community also committed itself to promote a comprehensive and durable solution to the external debt problem of African countries, including through the cancellation of 100 per cent of multilateral debt for highly indebted poor countries (HIPCs), consistent with the G-8 proposal, and, on a case-by-case basis, significant debt relief for heavily indebted non-HIPC African countries which have unsustainable debt burdens. We are, however, concerned that many African countries remain burdened by debt, and we call for urgent measures to address the debt crisis of those countries.

In this regard, we are greatly encouraged by the agreement reached in Washington on 25 September 2005 by the Development Committee and the International Monetary and Financial Committee of the Board of Governors of the International Monetary Fund to endorse the G-8 proposal to cancel 100 per cent of multilateral debt owed by 18 eligible HIPCs, 14 of which are in Africa. We call for the speedy implementation of that decision, as well as for a clear framework of implementation from the African Development Bank. We recognize that the agreement does not cover bilateral debt and debt owed to other multilateral credit institutions, and we call for measures to address those issues in order to address the debt burden in Africa comprehensively.

As rightly stated in the Secretary-General's report (A/60/178), while debt relief and increased ODA coupled with policy reforms are important to meeting Africa's needs in the short to medium term, equitable trade holds the key to its long-term growth and development. And yet it is in this area that the least progress has been made. Much lip service has been paid by the world community to trade liberalization and expeditious work towards implementing the development dimensions of the Doha Work Programme and to integrating African countries fully into the international trading system.

As we approach the Hong Kong Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO), scheduled for December of this year, we call on all WTO members, particularly the industrialized countries, to show leadership and the much-needed political will to move the development agenda forward. Fair trade, as argued in the report, not only requires market access, but also the strengthening of the capacity of African countries to export. In this connection, we endorse the recommendation that initiatives such as the trade-for-aid agenda, aimed at building Africa's capacity to compete in international trade, should be promoted and expanded.

We recognize the potential of South-South cooperation in promoting economic growth and development. The challenge, however, is to translate this potential into practical activities and programmes that can yield results within specific time frames, including through the implementation of initiatives such as the Tokyo International Conference on African Development-NEPAD Joint Policy Framework for the Promotion of Trade and Investment between Africa and Asia and the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership. However, we remain of the view that South-South cooperation should complement and not replace North-South cooperation.

The Secretary-General's report notes that the United Nations system, through its funds, programmes and specialized agencies, has been in the forefront of the advocacy and harnessing of international support for Africa's development efforts in general and NEPAD in particular. We call on the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies to further

improve the coordination of their support for NEPAD and the achievement of the MDGs in order to avoid duplication of activities and to maximize the use of available resources. As we embark on the implementation phase of the summit outcome, we look to the United Nations system to continue to offer its invaluable institutional support to the NEPAD programme, the African Union and individual African countries, as together we pursue the challenging goal of development in Africa.

To conclude, the African Group wishes to stress the importance of mutual accountability in the partnership for development that Africa is striving to establish with the international community, as recognized in the collaborative work done by the Economic Commission for Africa and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development on the mutual review of aid effectiveness in Africa. We share the view expressed in the biennial report issued by those two institutions that, at a time when large increases in aid to Africa are contemplated, both donors' and recipient African countries' systems for aid delivery and management should be strengthened. The African Group is convinced that mutual accountability will ensure improved development performance and sustained aid increases.

Mr. Thomson (United Kingdom): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 25 European Union member States. Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, Croatia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this statement.

First of all, I am speaking personally but I think I speak for my European Union colleagues as well. I welcome your introductory statement to this debate, Mr. President, and in particular the four points you underlined: the importance of implementing of the commitments made this year, the importance of building on the momentum achieved this year, the importance of relaying to the world the full story of Africa and the importance of the outcome of the Hong Kong trade talks, to which I shall turn in a moment.

On all these points, the European Union (EU) is committed to playing a leading role in helping to meet the special needs of Africa. I want to use the debate this morning to identify some of the ways in which the European Union hopes that the African development agenda can be taken forward over the coming months and implemented.

The 2005 World Summit outcome document underlines the commitment of the global community to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It also provides the Africa Partnership Forum with the principles of a joint framework to ensure delivery of international and African commitments to the continent. These advances represent a partnership between all of us. And both of these developments provide us with a substantive basis on which to build further, including by creating an environment conducive to the development of the whole African continent. As our heads of State and Government agreed, peace and security, development and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing.

As I said, I want to start with trade, a powerful engine for development and for achieving the MDGs. The European Union looks forward to working closely with partners towards success in the Doha Development Agenda, in particular in the run-up to the crucial WTO Ministerial Meeting in Hong Kong in December. We believe that it will be possible — and crucial — for substantial progress to be made in Hong Kong so as to bring the Doha Round to an early and successful conclusion in all areas of negotiation. With a comprehensive, pro-development agenda — combining trade liberalization with rule-making and complementary aid for trade and trade-related assistance — the Doha Round can bring benefits to all trading partners and in particular to developing countries. We also believe that it is important to make progress in the area of regional integration, which accounts for a substantial element of the income generated by trade.

Preferential market access remains important, in particular for the poorest countries, many of which are in Africa. The European Union market remains the most open, and the most important, for developing-country exports globally. Since 2001, our Everything But Arms scheme has provided duty-free and quota-free market access to all least developed countries exports. And the Cotonou Agreement provides preferential market access to the European Union by African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. Since 1980, trade between the European Union and developing countries has more than tripled and one fifth of all developing country exports now go to the European Union. As much as 97 per cent of African, Caribbean

and Pacific countries' exports to the European Union enter duty free, and tariff escalation is virtually non-existent.

But as the previous speaker, the Ambassador of Namibia, has just reminded us, Africa also needs greater support for trade capacity-building in order to maximize the opportunities created. The European Union is already the world's biggest provider of trade-related assistance. To help developing countries fully exploit market access opportunities, the European Community this summer pledged to increase such assistance to 1 billion euros per year.

Let me turn to aid now. The European Union currently provides almost half of all the money spent to help developing countries. As part of a comprehensive approach to our international assistance, the European Union is committed to providing more and better aid, multilateral debt relief and complementary innovative sources of finance in order to help meet the Millennium Development Goals. At present, four out of the five countries that exceed the United Nations target for official development assistance (ODA) of 0.7 per cent of GNP are members of the European Union. In June of this year, as the representative of Namibia recalled, the European Union adopted a new collective target of 0.56 per cent by 2010 and an undertaking to achieve a 0.7 per cent target by 2015, with a 0.33 per cent target for European Union member States who joined the Union after 2002. This landmark agreement should double European Union aid from current levels to over $80 billion by 2010. At least half of this aid will go to Africa.

To ensure that this huge increase in funds is used effectively, the European Council will agree to a new Africa strategy by December of this year. This will be a strategy of the whole European Union: the Union, its institutions and the member States. It will apply to the whole of Africa, not just to Africa south of the Sahara. The primary aim will be the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals right across Africa. It will encompass development, security and human rights. It will be based on the principles of African ownership, equality and mutual accountability. And it will launch a new European Union/Africa strategic partnership, setting the course of the relationship for the long term.

In order to deliver a better deal for the citizens of Africa, a key theme of this strategy will be support and help to develop strong African institutions. This will include a package of financial and practical help to build the capacity of the African Union, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and Africa's subregional and national institutions.

In particular, we support the African Peer Review Mechanism and its Secretariat Trust Fund, enabling African States to monitor each other's performance. We hope to see this process moving forward in 2006. We are providing European Union electoral observation missions to monitor elections in Africa and to help promote the adoption of ever-better electoral standards and practice. We will support the African Union in its endeavours to strengthen better governance, regional integration and poverty reduction in Africa through its economic and social programmes, including NEPAD. We will support efforts to enhance the capacity of the African Union and regional economic communities by providing programme support, in cooperation with other donors. We will work to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms by strengthening European Union/African cooperation within the international human rights system and by supporting the machinery for the protection of human rights. We will work for implementation of the rule of law, as a basis for respect for human rights, democracy and development, by providing support for institution-building.

Furthermore, in order to ensure that Africa's wealth benefits its people, the European Union will continue to support, both politically and financially, African States that tackle corruption. The European Union-Africa Strategy will ensure that aid will flow increasingly towards well-governed countries, while paying attention to all vulnerable States. And all EU member States will commit to early ratification of the United Nations Convention against Corruption and to the enactment of laws to return stolen assets.

HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria account for 6 million deaths each year in the developing world. This morning, you yourself, Mr. President, powerfully underlined the impact of malaria in particular. We must all work urgently to address the impact of those major communicable diseases through strengthened health systems that facilitate an integrated approach of prevention, treatment, care and research. All these require greater resources if Africa is to achieve the MDGs. The EU Programme for Action, announced earlier this year, outlines our future strategy for

combating HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. We are committed to the goal of universal access to prevention, treatment and care by 2010.

The European Union is a major contributor to the development and effective implementation of evidence-based malaria control programmes and to work on increasing the affordability of antimalarial medicines. The EU is supporting research for better malaria drugs and an effective vaccine. Some EU member States are currently working with partners to develop an advance market commitment for a malaria vaccine. And the EU is a strong supporter of the Roll Back Malaria Partnership and of the work of the World Health Organization, both of which are vital to scaling up the international response to malaria.

European Union member States and the European Commission were founding members of the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. To date, we have pledged $4.5 billion — more than half of all the money pledged to the Fund. Almost two thirds of the Fund's money goes to sub-Saharan Africa.

Our Namibian colleague reminded us that meaningful development cannot take place in an environment of violence and insecurity. The European Union welcomes African resolve to tackle the problems of insecurity and instability on the continent. Over the past few years, the African Union has sought to transform and develop the African security architecture through the establishment of its Peace and Security Council, and plans for a panel of the wise and a continental early-warning system, as well as through progress towards an African standby force. That commitment was reinforced at the African Union summit in Sirte this year, where leaders committed, as members will recall, to:

> "addressing conflict and political instability on the continent, with the aim of achieving a conflict-free Africa by 2010 by prioritizing and allocating more resources to conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding ..."

The European Union is fully committed to those efforts and to playing a full part in the 10-year plan for capacity-building with the African Union that was called for by the world summit just a few weeks ago. The European Union will continue its dialogue with the African Union with a view to establishing institutional linkages and defining a comprehensive operational agenda, particularly on peace and security. In that context, the timely holding of a second EU-Africa summit, as foreseen in the Cairo Declaration, remains an important objective of the EU-Africa dialogue. The European Union also welcomes commitments made by the Group of Eight to support African capacities for peace and security.

One of the European Union's main tools for supporting African efforts in peace and security is the African Peace Facility, a €250 million instrument to finance African-led peace support operations in Africa. It is operated and staffed by Africans, and it will help to build longer-term capacity in the African Union and in subregional African institutions to prevent, manage and resolve crises. So far, the Peace Facility has supported the African Union leadership in Darfur by providing more than €92 million to the African Union Mission in the Sudan. The European Union has also provided €6 million to the African Union's Peace and Security Department for its capacity-building plans. And we are currently considering how we might continue to provide support to African-led missions in the future through the African Peace Facility.

But, of course, the partnership between the European Union and the African Union on peace and security should not be only about money. In the future, the EU and the AU also hope to increase cooperation in areas such as planning and management capacity and information-sharing on doctrine and standards and logistical support. In that context, it is worth noting the European Union's support for the Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy. The EU will also continue working with African and other international partners to check the flow of unregulated arms on the continent. In addition, there is a need to ensure that European Union and African Union capacities can coordinate and mesh with the capacities of the United Nations.

It would not be right to end my statement, Mr. President, without underlining the importance of the Peacebuilding Commission; you have done so yourself. For Africa and Europe, the Peacebuilding Commission is one of the biggest prizes to come out of the summit and a major priority. The experience of the Economic and Social Council's ad hoc advisory groups on African countries emerging from conflict has demonstrated the central role that post-conflict peacebuilding plays in ensuring a smooth transition to

stability and development. For too long, the international community's efforts at peacebuilding, in Africa as elsewhere, have been marked by piecemeal and uncoordinated interventions that often lack national ownership. The result is the famous statistic that approximately half of post-conflict countries relapse into conflict within a decade. We have a moral, political and economic duty to improve our approach and to help those countries establish a lasting, sustainable peace.

The Peacebuilding Commission will be the forum for all relevant actors in peacebuilding, so that coordination and delivery can be genuinely improved. It will keep the political spotlight on fragile countries as they make the transition to development, and it will be a means to help mobilize sustained funding for peacebuilding. We must push forward and agree on the modalities of the Peacebuilding Commission quickly so that it can be ready to work by 31 December 2005, as we pledged at the summit. We must do this, not least for Africa's sake.

More generally, the whole United Nations system should play an important role in supporting African development to achieve the MDGs and to create security and sustainability throughout the continent. That includes agency work at the country level as well as the activities of the principal organs, including the General Assembly and the Security Council. A reformed Economic and Social Council also has an important role to play, particularly in promoting and monitoring the implementation of internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs.

The European Union is proud of its record of partnership with Africa. We will continue to work tirelessly with our friends and partners to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. We remain convinced that the MDGs, while ambitious, are achievable. We are putting in place both the resources and the strategy needed to realize that ambition and we look forward to the day when this challenge is met right across the African continent.

Mr. Neil (Jamaica): I would like, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, to thank you Mr. President, for your opening statement this morning, which has set the tone and established the focus for this debate.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his third consolidated report on progress in implementation of and international support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), contained in document A/60/178. For the Group of 77 and China, the discussion this morning is a necessary continuation of the focus this year on the special needs of Africa. These are critical times for the people of the continent, but we are seeing signs of hope.

Several reports considered during the course of this year, in particular the Millennium Project report and the report of the Commission for Africa, focused on ways to generate new momentum for development in Africa. Important decisions have been taken and specific commitments made to mobilize resources for Africa's development. If those are pursued and fulfilled, the prospects for the future will be brighter.

We can see from the Secretary-General's report that there have been positive developments in the implementation of NEPAD. The report provides detailed examples of the progress made in the areas of agriculture, health, education, infrastructure and information and communications technology. We are convinced that there is great scope for building on those gains.

Progress continues to be constrained, however, by several factors. The first concerns the issue of resources. The needs are substantial for the building of the social and economic infrastructure. For example, paragraph 15 of the Secretary-General's report draws attention to the lack of skilled human resources in the health sector and the particular challenge that that poses for African countries, where health professionals are leaving for better opportunities in developed countries. The solution to that ever-growing problem requires coordinated action on the part of both the African and the recipient States.

Similarly, in view of the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis on the socio-economic development of the continent, substantial resources are needed to support efforts to respond effectively to those pandemics. The 2005 World Summit Outcome reaffirms some important avenues through which that can be advanced so as to ensure increased bilateral and multilateral assistance to strengthen African health systems. We continue to call for a more affordable and accessible supply of drugs to be made available to Africa.

With respect to official development assistance (ODA), the trend has been towards an increase in the volume of ODA to Africa since 2002. The recent

European Union (EU) commitment to establishing timetables to meet the target of 0.7 per cent target of gross national income for ODA to developing countries and to the doubling of aid to Africa by 2010 are positive developments, which we welcome. There is, however, still cause for concern. Paragraph 38 of the Secretary-General's report identifies the need for more resources to be channelled to the leading programmes and sectors of NEPAD and for greater attention to be given to increasing budgetary support for development. Continuing efforts to improve the quality and effectiveness of aid are also needed, with the full involvement of both donor and recipient countries.

Another area requiring special attention is that of foreign direct investment (FDI) flows to Africa. Despite increases in FDI globally from $15 billion in 2003 to $20 billion in 2004, Africa's share in global foreign direct investment flows remains only 3 per cent. We believe that there is a need for more creative initiatives and greater efforts in capacity-building and infrastructural development in order to increase FDI to African countries. We look forward to good results from the ongoing discussion on the proposal to create an investment climate facility for Africa, which has been endorsed by the NEPAD secretariat and major multilateral and bilateral donor agencies.

On debt, the position of the Group of 77 and China is well known. Debt-relief initiatives should be additional to ODA resources for development purposes and should be all-encompassing, so that all heavily indebted developing countries can benefit appropriately.

With respect to trade, the forthcoming World Trade Organization Ministerial Meeting provides an important opportunity for significant decisions to be taken to reform the world trading system so as to provide better opportunities for trade to contribute to Africa's long-term growth and development. We expect every effort to be made so that the development dimensions of the Doha work programme can be truly realized.

With regard to the role of the United Nations, paragraph 56 of the Secretary-General's report correctly points to the need for greater coordination within the United Nations system in supporting the implementation of NEPAD. That is one area in which greater efforts will have to be made. We therefore support the proposals advanced to improve coordination between the United Nations and the African Union in order to enhance collaboration and coherence within the United Nations system in support of NEPAD.

Our commitments made in support of NEPAD should be honoured. The report identifies this as one of the major challenges in ensuring the timely and effective implementation of NEPAD in a manner which will generate significant results for Africa. In the process, we particularly wish to caution against the imposition of restrictive conditionalities in economic cooperation programmes. The design of such programmes should be in accordance with the priorities and strategies determined by each State, and suitably adapted to each particular institutional and cultural environment. It is important that those are applied on the basis of national ownership in order for maximum benefit to flow in the process of implementation.

The President: I would like to say once again that I regret that we have had to make provisional arrangements to hold our meeting in this chamber. If representatives prefer to speak from their seats, they may do so; I leave it up to them to choose. This is because of the weather conditions and the obvious need for the United Nations building to be refurbished. I ask for the understanding of members.

Mr. Talbot (Guyana): I would like to join previous speakers in thanking you, Mr. President, for your thoughtful statement at the beginning of our debate. It will serve as a useful reference point in our deliberations.

I am especially honoured to speak in today's debate on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) on behalf of the States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). CARICOM aligns itself fully with the statement just delivered by the Permanent Representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

CARICOM views the adoption of the New Partnership as a reflection of Africa's determination to harness its own resources to extricate its people from poverty, underdevelopment and marginalization. We are convinced that the Partnership offers a viable and authoritative framework not only for the mobilization of efforts by Africans themselves, but also for the mobilization of effective support on the part of the international community.

CARICOM member States are heartened by the leadership that African countries have shown both in laying the foundations for long-term development and in creating conditions for durable peace and security in that continent. The African Union (AU) has been a positive force for change on the continent and has been a credible partner to the international community in promoting the aspirations of human progress worldwide.

We follow with great interest the creative efforts of the AU in the development of new institutional arrangements to accelerate integration in the continent and to enable Africa to play its rightful role in the world. We share a common commitment with the AU to good governance in managing the affairs of our peoples. Those efforts, in our view, deserve the unstinting support of the international community. CARICOM congratulates the African Union on its achievements and pledges its continued support and cooperation in that regard.

The long-standing ties of solidarity and cooperation between Africa and the Caribbean received a welcome boost by the decision of the African Union to include its diaspora as the sixth region and to involve the representatives of the Caribbean diaspora in deliberations in the Economic, Social and Cultural Council and the civil society advisory group. Pursuant to that decision, during March of this year the Governments of Jamaica and South Africa co-sponsored a conference under the theme "Towards unity and united action by Africans and the African diaspora in the Caribbean for a better world". The conference, which was attended by all CARICOM member States, with representatives from both the public sector and civil society, recommended the further development of a concrete mechanism for the institutionalization of the relationships between the AU and CARICOM, identified specific areas for collaboration and the building of linkages between countries in Africa and the Caribbean, called for collaboration among civil society, and agreed that CARICOM and the AU would explore ways to harness international diplomacy to promote our mutual objectives in the United Nations and the World Trade Organization (WTO). The outcome of the conference received the endorsement of CARICOM heads at their twenty-sixth annual meeting, held earlier this year in Saint Lucia, marking the beginning of a promising new chapter in the relations between our two regions at all levels.

Let me now comment briefly on the third consolidated report on progress in implementation of and international support for the New Partnership, as contained in document A/60/178. The report, in our view, provides a hopeful overview of developments over the past year. It notes that 2005 has been marked by important regional actions and greater international response in support of Africa's development. CARICOM welcomes the promising developments on the continent in certain sectoral areas, such as infrastructure, information and communication technology, health, education, environment and tourism, and agriculture, led by African countries and organizations. In respect of agriculture, the elaboration of the road map for the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, acknowledged as the most important development in that area over the past year, harbours the potential for the promotion of a "green revolution" on the continent and the strengthening of the underpinnings of its long-term development.

Those encouraging achievements notwithstanding, many obstacles stand in the way of the attainment of NEPAD objectives and of the Millennium Development Goals on the continent. The report calls attention to a number of the many challenges and constraints that continue to beset the implementation of the New Partnership. The HIV/AIDS pandemic, along with other communicable diseases, is still taking a heavy toll on the human capital and the social and economic infrastructure of Africa. Africa's heavy debt burden remains a major drain on its development potential. The continent lacks the financial resources needed to generate the requisite levels of growth to reduce poverty. Africa's share of global trade continues to be marginal, and while the region has recently witnessed positive developments in attracting foreign direct investment, those gains need to be consolidated through a facilitative international framework of support for efforts on the continent to create an environment conducive to investment.

That state of affairs represents a major challenge not only for Africa, but for the international community as a whole. It underlines the critical importance of a long-term engagement on the part both of Africa and of its development partners in order to assure the full realization of the objectives of NEPAD.

Recent initiatives by the international community offer hope that such an engagement can indeed materialize, to the mutual benefit of Africa and its development partners. We welcome the recent G-8 Africa Action Plan, which promises debt relief, increased aid flows, a commitment to improving global market access for African exports, and an agreement to provide medical assistance to the continent. Commitments made by developed partners to achieve the 0.7 per cent official development assistance target by 2015 are also welcome. We remain hopeful that those commitments will be implemented with due dispatch.

We note, however, that even as those measures are put into effect, there are developments in a number of areas, such as the marketing of commodities, including sugar and cotton, which may negatively impact the future of many countries both in Africa and the Caribbean. We therefore call for renewed international attention to the need for coherence in development, trade and finance policies to avert the erosion of development gains and the aggravation of poverty in developing countries. We also look to the WTO meeting in Hong Kong as an important test of the commitment to placing development at the heart of multilateral trade negotiations.

In the final analysis, while the primary responsibility for the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa rests with Africans themselves, the fortunes of the continent will depend not only on the actions of Africans, but also on the actions of the international community, which have the potential either to support or to undermine the gains made in recent years. The 2005 world summit outcome has pledged the international community to coherent support for NEPAD implementation and to specific measures in favour of African countries. The implementation of those commitments must now engage our urgent attention.

For its part, CARICOM, linked to Africa by fraternal ties and solidarity in historic struggles, remains committed to playing a positive and constructive role in support of the aspirations embodied in the New Partnership.

Mr. Maema (Lesotho): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC): Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

At the outset, we wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to preside over the General Assembly at its sixtieth session. We are confident that your vast experience and able leadership will lead us to a successful session. SADC pledges its support and cooperation. SADC fully aligns itself with the statement made by Namibia on behalf of the African Group, which outlines the significant strides Africa, in partnership with the international community, is making in the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

SADC welcomes the Secretary General's third consolidated report on progress in implementation of and international support for NEPAD, in document A/60/178, as well as the report on the causes of conflict and promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, in document A/60/182. Both reports highlight the progress made so far towards realizing Africa's aspirations to eradicating poverty and attaining sustained economic growth, sustainable development and durable peace. Perhaps more importantly, the reports call for more concerted international efforts to address the growing challenges and constraints that continue to undermine development in Africa.

Four years ago, Africa adopted NEPAD as a regional policy framework to guide the continent in its quest for economic prosperity and stability. NEPAD is anchored in the fundamental principles of African ownership, leadership and accountability, as well as good governance and the maintenance of peace and security. NEPAD envisages a strong partnership with the international community built on mutual goodwill, respect and solidarity, a programme which this body has recognized as a framework through which the international community should assist Africa.

We recognized then, as we do today, that national Governments and regional economic communities have critical roles to play in the realization and implementation of the NEPAD initiative. In that respect, allow me to highlight the efforts that SADC is making to harmonize its development priorities with NEPAD through the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), particularly in the areas of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development

Programme (CAADP) and the environment; education and health; science and technology; infrastructure development and tourism; resource mobilization, capacity-building, gender mainstreaming and civil society participation; and democracy, peace, security and governance. To that end, priority has been accorded to the harmonization of policies and coordination of the implementation of key programmes in the area of social and human development, in line with RISDP, the Millennium Development Goals, and, indeed, NEPAD.

Furthermore, since 2004, the SADC and NEPAD secretariats have scaled up their coordination of and participation in NEPAD-related development activities and their mobilization of resources to expedite the implementation of projects. That relationship will no doubt go a long way towards contributing to greater coherence and synchronization of priorities and plans, as well as enabling the possibility of sharing expertise and resources in critical areas.

SADC has a common agenda geared towards the promotion and attainment of sustainable development, peace, stability and democracy. We have long recognized that good political, economic and corporate governance is an essential prerequisite of sustainable development. In that regard, we are pleased to note that half of the SADC member States have acceded to the African Peer Review Mechanism. Those are important tenets to which both SADC and NEPAD fully subscribe.

SADC will therefore continue to strive to promote strong synergies between its development programmes and NEPAD by working together and pursuing projects that will have direct economic and social benefits for SADC countries; contribute to poverty eradication and human development; have economy-of-scale gains where regionally coordinated investments or operations will result in substantial cost savings and employment benefits; unlock the economic potential of less developed areas and countries to promote balanced and equitable development; contribute to SADC's integration into the regional, continental and global economy; contribute to market integration specially facilitating free movement of goods, services and factors of production; and contribute to sustainable development and gender equality.

Efforts to source funds to implement development projects within the NEPAD framework have been scaled up by the NEPAD and SADC secretariats. In that context, intensive consultations are ongoing to speed up the implementation of the Short-term Action Plan for infrastructure and the CAADP. Moreover, in the NEPAD Short-term Action Plan, SADC has also identified the need to upgrade transport infrastructure along some key regional corridors.

SADC continues to contend with the HIV/AIDS scourge, which is threatening to reverse all the development gains we have made over the years. In 2004, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS estimated that one third of the global community living with HIV is in SADC countries. We have, however, given top priority to combating the pandemic, as well as other communicable diseases, such as malaria and tuberculosis, that are decimating our productive populations. To overcome those afflictions in the long run, we will continue to count on the support of our development partners.

SADC welcomes the recent pledges of increased support by the international community, as well as the recent efforts to scale up official development assistance by realizing the 0.7 per cent target. In that regard, we commend the European Union for setting up timetables for achieving that long overdue target. We equally laud and welcome the initiative of the G-8 to cancel 100 per cent of the debt of the highly indebted poor countries, 14 of which are in Africa.

The Secretary-General has noted in his report that significant progress has been made in the implementation of the NEPAD initiative. That is largely due to the impressive support of our development partners, to which SADC and, indeed, the rest of Africa owe a debt of gratitude. However, the Secretary-General also highlighted the ever-pressing challenges of inadequate official development assistance, the growing debt burden, the unfair and inequitable global trade regime, and very low foreign direct investment flows to Africa.

It should be a matter of great concern to all of us that Africa continues to have the lowest share of global foreign direct investment flows. Equally worrying is Africa's unsustainable debt burden. For instance, the SADC countries have a total debt stock of $78.1 billion, with an annual total debt service amounting to $6.8 billion. Unless progress is made in those areas, the

implementation of NEPAD and the realization of other internationally agreed development goals will remain elusive. It is therefore imperative to ensure that all commitments made are realized expeditiously if Africa is to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and successfully implement its national development strategies, including poverty reduction strategy papers and all programmes and projects embodied in the NEPAD initiative.

In conclusion, the Secretary-General in his report points out that

> "[T]his is a moment of opportunity for making progress in Africa's development for which NEPAD is the main policy framework. The central challenge is to grasp the opportunity and maintain the momentum" (*A/60/178, para. 59*).

SADC can only concur with the Secretary-General that at no point in the past has an African regional policy framework held such immense promise, exhibited such enormous potential for development, and generated so much hope and international support. We can only do well if we heed the Secretary-General's counsel and not lose the important momentum at this critical juncture.

Mr. Hamidon (Malaysia): The States members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) — Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, Thailand, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and Malaysia — wish to associate themselves with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

ASEAN wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and thorough report on progress in the implementation of and international support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), as contained in document A/60/178.

Since the New Partnership for Africa's Development was launched four years ago, there has been a transformation of the African peoples' forward movement towards greater integration and unity. The African countries' determination to maintain a positive momentum, despite the many and complex challenges, is truly admirable. We are aware from the report of the Secretary-General that the African countries have taken action on many fronts, including in infrastructure development, information and communication technology, health, education, agriculture and many other important areas. The international community has made a pledge to meet the special needs of Africa. With the appropriate international response, African countries would have a greater chance of achieving the Millennium Development Goals and of better integrating themselves into the world economy. In that connection, ASEAN hopes that partnerships for Africa's development can be further strengthened.

The partnership between Asia and Africa is long-standing and was further strengthened at the inaugural Asia-Africa Conference in Bandung in 1955. That historic occasion gave rise to a unique spirit of kinship and solidarity known as the "Bandung spirit" among the countries of the two regions. The 2005 Asia-Africa Summit and the golden jubilee of the Asia-Africa Conference of 1955, held earlier this year in Indonesia, revived the commitment of the two continents to build a world resting on the principles of peace, security, stability and prosperity. A bridge spanning the Indian Ocean, connecting the continents of Asia and Africa, is now being built through the New Asia-Africa Strategic Partnership (NAASP).

There is much common ground between NEPAD and NAASP, as the challenges being addressed by Africa are similar to those faced by other developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region, including ASEAN. Poverty still exists in rural and urban areas. Both regions also face the pandemic of HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases, such as tuberculosis and malaria. The destructive forces of natural disasters have also affected our lives. With such similarities, it is only natural that Asia and Africa should work together. In that regard, as a subregional organization, ASEAN would very much like to have greater dialogue and cooperation in the full materialization of NEPAD, as well as NAASP. Such a dialogue has been ongoing, including through the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) and the Asia-Africa Sub-Regional Organizations Conference, in which ASEAN has been actively participating.

I would like to reiterate ASEAN's commitment to the successful implementation of NEPAD and NAASP, which are complementary efforts, and we hope that the international community will continue to give its full support to them.

I shall now make a statement on behalf of my own country, Malaysia.

Malaysia wishes to take this opportunity to extend its best wishes to Mr. Ibrahim Agboola Gambari, Under-Secretary-General/Special Adviser on Africa, on his new assignment as Under-Secretary-General in the Department of Political Affairs, effective 1 July 2005. We are confident that the Secretary-General will expeditiously appoint a candidate of equal calibre to the post of Special Adviser on Africa, as the portfolio — which entails the promotion of international support for NEPAD and the development of Africa — is indeed very important.

As we have previously enunciated in the past, Malaysia views NEPAD as a courageous and bold undertaking by the African countries to prevent their further marginalization from the process of globalization. In their efforts to integrate with the global economy, African countries themselves must have the ownership of their development programmes, in partnership with the relevant international agencies. In that regard, we consider NEPAD to be the most viable socio-economic blueprint for bringing sustained economic growth that would, in turn, contribute to the strengthening of democracy and enable the greater enjoyment of human rights by all the peoples of the continent.

Malaysia welcomed and strongly supported the efforts to bring development into Africa through NEPAD. We commend the African countries for supporting and adopting the initiative in their development agenda. We also applaud the leaders of Africa for their continuing commitment and steadfast determination to take bold steps in promoting sustainable economic growth and social development, reducing poverty, and achieving food security and political stability in their respective countries. I wish to recall that the Non-Aligned Movement, too, at its twelfth conference of heads of State or Government in Kuala Lumpur in February 2003, commended the establishment of NEPAD and supported its full implementation.

We are all aware that Africa faces numerous, multifaceted and complex issues that are challenging and must be dealt with in a comprehensive, integrated and coordinated manner. The continent still lags behind the target of six per cent growth in gross national product per annum, as established by the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. It has been noted that Africa will require an average annual economic growth of seven per cent to enable it to reduce by half the number of people living in poverty in the continent by 2015. That can be achieved only with external assistance, particularly from the developed countries, in terms of providing financial resources and foreign direct investment and opening up markets for exports from African countries.

In that connection, we share the view of the Secretary-General that NEPAD cannot succeed without a significant increase in support from the international community and that unleashing Africa's potential for development requires harnessing the creativity and dynamism of private initiative in a range of areas, including agriculture, industry, science and technology, and infrastructure development. In that regard, Malaysia welcomes the agreement by the Group of 8 to cancel the debt of the 18 poorest countries, the majority of which are in Africa. We are also pleased with the adoption by the European Union of a set of clear timelines for reaching the 0.7 per cent target of its gross national income as official development assistance, and to double its aid to more than $80 billion a year by 2010.

Malaysia is of the view that the establishment of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) could contribute further to efforts to achieve the goals set under NEPAD. In that regard, we hope further initiatives can be undertaken to encourage and enable African countries to accede to the APRM. We also acknowledge the important contributions and roles of the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the Economic Community of Central African States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Southern African Development Community.

Malaysia is pleased with its existing state of relations and the level of cooperation with Africa. Nonetheless, we would continue to explore additional ways and means to further promote cooperation with countries in the continent. Malaysia's trade and economic links with Africa have grown at a satisfactory rate. In 2002, our trade with Africa totalled $1.353 billion. Last year, in 2004, it rose to $2.215 billion, an increase of 64 per cent within a span of two years. Malaysia will continue to encourage its private sector to promote and further enhance its close

economic ties with its counterparts in the African countries for our mutual benefit.

Since 1980, within the framework of the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme, Malaysia has offered technical cooperation in areas in which it has comparative advantage in term of experience and expertise to 46 African countries. Malaysia considers this programme as its modest but useful contribution to Africa in the context of South-South cooperation. We have also engaged African partners, at both the governmental and private sector levels, through the annual Langkawi International Dialogue and the Southern African International Dialogue, convened under the auspices of the Commonwealth Partnership for Technology Management. Malaysia participated as an observer in the Third Tokyo International Conference on African Development and looks forward to actively participating again in TICAD IV in Japan in 2008. Malaysia also supports the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership adopted at the 2005 Asian-African Summit in Jakarta.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm Malaysia's commitment to cooperating with our African brothers and sisters in their collective efforts towards achieving peace, sustainable development and prosperity in their countries. Malaysia reiterates that it will do its utmost, within its limited means and capacity, to join others in assisting Africa, a continent that holds tremendous resources and potential, in developing its own capacity to fully integrate into the world economy.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, let me express our appreciation for the reports of the Secretary-General on the agenda items under discussion. We endorse the statements made by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and by the representative of Namibia on behalf of the Group of African States. We also thank you, Sir, for your opening statement at this meeting, which made a unique contribution to our debate.

The outcome document of the recent High-level Plenary Meeting stresses the need to strengthen international support for Africa so that it can meet its special needs. The heads of State and Government particularly emphasized the central role of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the ideal framework in which the international community and the United Nations can mobilize efforts to assist the African countries to build a better future for coming generations.

Egypt attaches particular importance to that initiative because it is based on realities in Africa and on a comprehensive vision of the challenges and problems the continent is facing. It is also based on the achievement of a genuine international development partnership in which Africa and the developed States can work in earnest to attain African and global development objectives.

Egypt has taken several leading measures at various levels to support NEPAD. Egypt hosted the thirteenth summit of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee in Sharm el-Sheikh in April. We feel that there is an urgent need to activate the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in order to help Africa to strengthen democracy, good governance and respect for human rights, and Egypt has therefore made a voluntary contribution of $1 million to the APRM Trust Fund, in addition to its regular annual contribution of $100,000.

With respect to health, HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other diseases, President Mubarak has undertaken to establish an African centre to combat HIV/AIDS and endemic diseases, in the context of Egypt's commitment to strengthening African capacities to attain the priority goals of the Millennium Summit by enhancing South-South cooperation and by drawing on international expertise and assistance. Work has already begun on the creation of the centre in Egypt, in accordance with the decision taken at a meeting of the African ministers of health in Egypt last June.

With respect to market access and agriculture, Egypt hosted a regional meeting for North Africa to draw up projects to be implemented in the context of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. It also hosted a meeting of African ministers of trade to consider ways to enhance Africa's access to international markets, as set out in the Cairo Declaration elaborating Africa's unified position vis-à-vis the agenda of the World Trade Organization planning meeting to be held in Hong Kong in December.

We would stress in particular the need for the international community to fulfil its commitments to Africa by mobilizing financial resources to implement African projects. We warmly welcome the constructive

discussions that took place in the context of the recent NEPAD forum on the financing and implementation of African projects, held in London. We hope that an agreement can be reached as soon as possible on funding African projects, reflecting the various commitments of the developed countries to our continent.

Meeting at Gleneagles, the industrialized nations of the G-8 pledged to cancel the debts of 18 least developed countries, 14 of which are in Africa. While that initiative was highly important, we hope that it will be broadened ever further to cover the wider area of the foreign debt burden that weighs heavily on all the indebted countries of Africa, including the medium-income States.

Furthermore, the commitment of the developed countries must not be limited to the relief of external debt. We hope that they will open their markets to Africa's products and help it to increase production and diversify its exports. We also hope that they will stabilize basic commodity prices and raise their official development assistance to the internationally agreed levels. Finally, we hope to cooperate with the developed countries in implementing the agreements reached in the Millennium Declaration Goals, particularly the Millennium Development Goals, as they pertain to meeting Africa's needs at all levels.

Egypt wishes to underline its endorsement of the conclusions of the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict in Africa (A/60/182). The report presents a unique vision of the achievements, challenges and threats in the area of peace and security on the African continent, as well as regional and international initiatives taken in that regard.

Today's debate comes at a crucial moment, as we are working to act on the decisions, recommendations and commitments made at September's High-level Plenary Meeting, as contained in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1). The outcome document included commitments to strengthen African peacekeeping and peacebuilding capacities through the growing structure of the African Union, in addition to the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission. We stress the need for a multidimensional approach to the concept of peace and security and its profound inter-relationship with the achievement of sustainable development in the African continent. In that respect, we underline the complementary roles of the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, regional organizations, international financial institutions and the funds and programmes of the United Nations.

Following the establishment of priorities and strategies by African Governments, we hope that a decision on creating the Peacebuilding Commission can be reached by the end of the year. We call for more institutional cooperation between NEPAD and the United Nations, in particular because NEPAD, following guidelines laid down by the African Union, is developing a strategic policy framework for dealing with the challenges of the post-conflict phase and reconstruction. The Peacebuilding Commission should take into account African points of view and priorities with respect to peacebuilding on the continent.

We welcome the report's thorough description of priorities on the African continent, in particular the continuing negative impact of the illegal exploitation of natural resources in conflict areas. Egypt calls on the Security Council to give particular attention to that problem when dealing with the causes of armed conflicts in Africa, because it is well known that the illegal exploitation of natural resources in conflict areas is a main cause of the persistence of armed conflicts. Furthermore, the problem is linked to the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons.

Finally, the report transmitted by the Secretary-General in his note (A/60/208) makes clear that attaining the Millennium Development Goal of halting malaria by 2015 requires greater financial resources on the domestic and international levels. In fact, with $3 billion spent annually on combating malaria, it is very important to develop vaccines and diversified treatments, given the disease's resistance to current antimalarial treatments. We believe that more medical research is required for new therapies and vaccines to combat potential new strains of malaria. Governments and pharmaceutical companies should increase investment in order to provide affordable treatments to people in developing countries.

It is not impossible to eliminate malaria. In 1998, Egypt successfully moved out of the category of countries in which malaria is endemic, thanks to strenuous and persistent efforts to fully eliminate the disease except for a few cases coming from outside the country. The Egyptian programme to eliminate malaria has been a success in all respects. For that reason,

Egypt would like to share its experience with interested countries in Africa and elsewhere.

Ms. Núñez Mordoche (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, my delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement made by the Ambassador of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Many identify the African continent with idyllic postcards of safaris on its great prairies or with the much-repeated images of the ills afflicting that continent, as if nothing else was worth mentioning and as if its men and women did not exist. It is as if the ancestral wisdom of Africa's peoples did not deserve careful study and preservation.

For Cubans, Africa is not a legend from some distant time and place. For Cubans, Africa is an essential part of what we are and what we hope to build in the future. Thus, it is absurd to speak of the Cuban nation merely from a Eurocentric perspective.

During the colonial period, 1.3 million black slaves were uprooted from their homelands to work in the plantations of the Spanish society of that time. They came from different ethnic groups: the Lukumí, Carabalí, Congo, Ganga, Mandingo, Mina, Bibi and Yoruba. To be sure, the colonizers amassed huge fortunes, thanks to the toil of those peoples, but they could not prevent the slaves from passing on their languages to us, along with their religious beliefs, their music and their temperament. Cuba changed forever.

Similar situations occurred throughout almost the entire American continent and the West Indies. The route of slavery was an integral part of the flagrant exploitation and the impoverishment of Africa. Today, many try to ignore, justify and, even worse, erase that sad episode of modern history.

Much has been said of the current conditions in Africa and the accumulated needs of the region. Many of those who claim to be concerned about the region have not shown much interest in changing the essential problem, after centuries of exploitation and plundering.

As long as the current political and economic order prevails — in which a few consume almost everything and the majority of the planet's population is left excluded from the so-called benefits of neo-liberal globalization — Africa will remain marginalized, and the legacy of colonialism will never come to an end.

If the Governments of the region continue to be told to implement failed structural adjustment policies, Africa will continue to finance the opulence of rich countries. The developed countries will make new promises of official development assistance and will perhaps fulfil some of those promises, but they will keep collecting hundreds of times the amount of the promised assistance as service on external debt. Today, Africa spends four times as much on debt servicing as it does on education and health care combined.

Cuba firmly believes in the ability of African leaders to find solutions for the conflict situations that have a devastating effect on the economic and social advancement of the region and create an additional obstacle to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The steps taken recently in that direction through the hard work of the African Union are proof of this. Cuba will continue to support the African Union and all other regional cooperation mechanisms as they work to find their own solutions to the problems of Africa. There have been many regional efforts to that end, and more than anything else they require from the United Nations an integrated focus on the resolution of problems related to Africa's peace, security and development.

Regional efforts require the cessation of foreign interference, the total elimination of mercenary activities and an end to disputes among transnational corporations to control the vast mineral resources of the continent, so that the profits from their sale are finally used to eradicate definitively poverty, improve health conditions and guarantee education for all the inhabitants of the continent.

A cardinal principle of Cuba's foreign policy is the principled practice of internationalism and solidarity with other peoples of the world. Cuba did not desert Africans in their struggle against colonialism, and we never asked for anything in return. When the apartheid regime was defeated, the Cubans took home only the mortal remains of our fighters.

Our policy of collaboration with African countries, implemented since the early years of the Cuban revolution, is carried out through diplomatic relations with 52 of the countries of the region, our 30 accredited diplomatic missions in the area, and the 22 African missions based in Havana. In addition, we have maintained a policy of defending African interests in all international forums.

Cuba has given material reality to its selfless solidarity and cooperation to almost all the countries of the region. The main sectors of interaction are health care, education, sports, agriculture, fisheries, construction, water resources and physical planning. To date, some 30,000 young African students have been graduated from Cuban educational institutions.

The Cuban proposal, presented at the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly, on HIV/AIDS, to provide medical personnel to help fight the serious effects of the pandemic, still stands. It would be enough if those with larger financial resources decided to contribute to a programme of triangular cooperation, the results of which would be immediately noticeable.

Mr. Toro Jiménez (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Our African experience shows that, more than money, what is needed is serious political will to improve cooperation, addressing the priorities identified by local authorities and showing respect for the traditions and cultures of the beneficiaries of cooperation.

Cuba is making efforts despite being a country of scarce resources and having been subjected to a strict economic, commercial and financial embargo for more than four decades.

The people of Africa have a right to peace, a just international order and sustainable development. They do not need paternalism; they need training of human capital and access to markets and technologies. They do not need hypocritical lessons on what is in their best interest. Africa deserves, above all, solidarity and respect.

Mr. Hachani (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and by Namibia on behalf of the African Group.

By dedicating part of its recommendations to the specific needs of Africa, the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting (resolution 60/1) confirmed the priority attached to Africa by the international community and the United Nations system. It also affirmed the urgent need to put this consensus into practice at various levels by setting up a genuine partnership for development for Africa, which has long been weakened by the horrors of armed conflict, instability and poverty and pandemics.

The emphasis placed on malaria during today's debate is very significant in this connection. The final document calls for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) — a comprehensive and integrated programme to promote Africa's development and the basis for cooperation with its partners — to be provided with the financial, material and institutional means required for it to effectively function. Yet despite the determination of the African countries and the commitment of their partners, the implementation of this important African programme requires greater mobilization on the part of the international community and better coordination of its means of intervention.

The Secretary-General's third consolidated report on progress in implementation and international support for NEPAD (A/60/178) particularly emphasizes this and advocates strengthening national and regional capacities in the area of the implementation of NEPAD to ensure that coordination and coherence exist between national development plans and NEPAD priorities. My delegation shares that view, but we believe that the process of macroeconomic reform and human development requires financial, human and technical resources currently well beyond the means of many African countries. Hence the structural need for outside help commensurate with these needs.

In this connection, Tunisia welcomes the conclusions of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (*see A/60/16*) regarding a renewed United Nations commitment to provide effective and coordinated assistance to the various NEPAD programmes and to identifying innovative approaches for funding its priorities.

Africa is undoubtedly the region most affected by the contrasts of the contemporary world. Despite its determination to become self-sufficient by adopting plans for restructuring and upgrading, despite its progress on settling conflicts that have long stood in the way of development in numerous countries, and despite its high priority on the world agenda, Africa is lagging far behind in the timetable for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

There can be no doubt that the development process depends to a great extent on the international economic and financial context. Consequently, creating

an environment conducive to the development of Africa — which is also a pillar of the process of implementation of the NEPAD priorities — is a prerequisite for achieving stable and permanent balance in the regional and subregional political and economic order. That would enable Africa to speed up the process of integration into the world economy and to gradually do away with the sources and hotbeds of conflict. The interaction between development and security has been clearly proven. Peace will always remain fragile and subject to reverses without a propitious economic environment and real development prospects.

In this context, we should welcome the efforts made by the African Union, particularly the establishment of the Peace and Security Council, for the prevention, management and settlement of conflict and post-conflict situations are among the prerequisites for implementation of the MDGs and the NEPAD priorities. Likewise, for the Peace and Security Council to be able to discharge its mandate, it is essential to continue to provide better institutional harmonization of its actions with those of the United Nations. The implementation of the decision to create a Peacebuilding Commission will undoubtedly provide a very valuable instrument in that connection.

Finally, we hope that the Office of the Special Advisor to the Secretary-General on Africa, responsible among other things for relations with NEPAD, will continue to grow in strength.

Mr. Suresh Kurup (India): We thank the Secretary-General for the third consolidated report on the progress in implementation and international support of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and other reports prepared for this item. We associate ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77.

Crafting partnerships among the African countries and between Africa and the rest of the international community lies at the core of NEPAD. With its abundance of natural resources and the tremendous capacity of its peoples to be agents of change, Africa holds the key to its own development. We are convinced that success in achieving the objectives of NEPAD will depend on an African-led and Africa-developed agenda. The issues and challenges facing Africa, and their solutions, are best known to African countries themselves. They have demonstrated their commitment to advancing the implementation of NEPAD through a number of measures. Africa needs concerted international support for the solutions that it has identified.

The report of the Secretary-General's Advisory Panel on International Support for NEPAD (A/60/85) emphasizes the need to move from rhetoric to action. It cautions that special initiatives in support of African development have failed in the past to live up to the promises made or to their potential. During the past ten months, we have had the opportunity to discuss the special needs of Africa in the context of the Secretary-General's report "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005), and earlier during discussions of the Millennium Project report. The Advisory Panel has observed that these and other documents have stressed that significant additional financial assistance over an extended period of time will be needed to meet Africa's human needs and development goals. The Panel, while noting that humanitarian assistance has been critical in saving lives, urges development partners to provide assistance on a long-term basis, rather than responding only when a crisis arises.

The General Assembly, in its resolution 59/250, entitled "Triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system", has also highlighted the need for the early provision of development assistance even as the international community begins to provide humanitarian assistance. The international community needs to remain engaged during the period of transition from relief to development.

The report of the Advisory Panel has put forward some ideas, emphasizing, inter alia, the need for investment in Africa's human resources; development of its private sector, apart from increases in aid levels; debt relief; completion of the Doha round of multilateral trade negotiations; and improvement in the quality and coordination of support provided by the United Nations. Through a variety of initiatives, India has consistently endeavoured to be a friend and partner of Africa in its developmental efforts in many of the areas identified by the Advisory Panel.

It has been India's objective to impart a substantive economic content to our relationship with Africa. Despite limited resources, India has, over the years, made contributions to several Africa-specific

funds and programmes. The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme has over many decades provided a framework for enhancing cooperation between India and African countries. A large number of African students have shared in the benefits of the Indian education system. India's contribution of $200 million for engagement with NEPAD projects and the formation of a new group — TEAM-9, the Techno-Economic Approach for Africa-India Movement — are specific examples of India's contribution to solidarity with Africa and of South-South cooperation. Over the last six months, projects amounting to some $84.3 million have been approved within the framework of the NEPAD line of credit, and several projects, supported by India under the TEAM-9 programme, have also been approved.

The Advisory Panel has highlighted the importance of trade and investments in Africa. Over the last few years, economic and commercial ties have grown between India and Africa and trade has risen sharply. India imports substantially from Africa, and Indian joint ventures in Africa cover a range of products. India also has fairly extensive investments in a number of countries in Africa.

India has started work on a connectivity mission in Africa which will support tele-education, tele-medicine, e-commerce, e-governance, info-tainment, resource-mapping and meteorological services. A seamless and integrated satellite, fibre optics and wireless network to be provided by India will connect five universities, 51 learning centres, 10 super-speciality hospitals and 53 patient-end locations in rural areas all over Africa and will provide videoconferencing facilities connecting all 53 heads of State and Government in Africa. The Pan-African Network Project has been formally endorsed by the African Union (AU), and it is expected that a memorandum of understanding between the Government of India and the AU will be signed during the visit of a high-level AU team to India, from 25 to 29 October 2005. This is a landmark project that will assist our friends in Africa in meeting Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in education and health care.

India and Africa have a common fight against poverty and disease. India is putting together a substantial initiative to assist in Africa's fight against HIV/AIDS and other pandemics. We hope to encourage Indian pharmaceutical companies to establish production facilities in Africa to cater to the increasing requirement for affordable medicines, especially for antiretroviral drugs. There is need for the international community to urgently provide resources for an expanded and comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS and other diseases.

From 1960 to 1973, African Governments pursued activist policies in protecting industries and defending livelihoods, but the 1973 oil crisis led to serious indebtedness, worsened by the International Monetary Fund's structural adjustment policies. The results are visible today in the challenges faced by sub-Saharan Africa. The Millennium Project report highlighted the problems of sub-Saharan Africa and the poverty trap — that is, low tax returns, low saving rates and the like. Debt-constrained structural adjustment policies compounded the problem through a decline in agricultural investment. The region got the worst of both worlds because of the agricultural policies of developed countries that were underpinned by enormous subsidies.

The fulcrum of international economic endeavour is Millennium Development Goal 8, as well as paragraphs 42, 44 and 62 of the Monterrey Consensus. Delivery on these issues is essential for fulfilling the objectives of NEPAD. Achievement of the MDGs in a sustained manner, leading to real economic transformation, is hardly possible without more and effective debt relief, a fundamental reform of international economic and monetary institutions and a successful realization of the development agenda of the Doha round.

Against this backdrop, India has consistently supported proposals in the United Nations to convert into grants all remaining official bilateral debt of the poorest African countries and has supported the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative. India did its part by writing off the debt owed by African countries under the HIPC Initiative and by restructuring commercial debt. The debt problems faced by many low- and middle-income developing countries continue to severely constrain their ability to accelerate economic development and to achieve the MDGs.

We welcome the G-8 proposal for irrevocable debt cancellation for the HIPC countries, a proposal that has generated high expectations in eligible countries. The modalities for the implementation of

this initiative need to be further clarified, notably on additional resources, the possible inclusion of additional beneficiary countries, and policy conditionalities such as privatization and trade liberalization, which have in some cases been detrimental to development.

We note from the Secretary-General's report that many recent trends in Africa have been positive, that the number of major conflicts has been reduced and that most African countries enjoy relatively stable political conditions, with the majority having democratically elected Governments. We hope that these developments will provide the basis for an environment conducive to economic growth and development. An important factor in addressing the causes of conflict and contributing to durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, cited by the Secretary-General's report, is the commitment of the international community, including United Nations organizations, to allocate increased financial, human and technical resources.

For its part, India has participated in almost every peacekeeping mission in Africa and has over 5,000 peacekeepers now serving in Africa. In this context, we have supported the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission that aims to address the special needs of countries emerging from conflict towards recovery, reintegration and reconstruction. We look forward to its becoming functional by the end of this year.

The 2005 World Summit Outcome document (resolution 60/1) welcomed the substantial progress made by the African countries in fulfilling their commitments and emphasized the need to carry forward the implementation of NEPAD. Through that document, our leaders expressed their resolve to strengthen cooperation with NEPAD by providing coherent support for the programmes drawn up by African leaders within that framework. The outcome document contains several substantive proposals. We hope to see appropriate follow-up mechanisms put in place in pursuit of those proposals.

India's solidarity with Africa in the struggle against colonialism and apartheid, its peacekeeping operations in Africa since the 1960s and its economic and scientific collaboration with Africa today are aimed not just at maintaining peace and territorial integrity, but at empowering Africa economically and politically, in both national and international political and economic decision-making. It is hoped that the best will not be sacrificed to the good. While maintaining the principle of non-discrimination, we should recall that, historically, no struggles for empowerment have ever achieved success in one fell swoop, but rather through a process of negotiations and over time. Any alternative may run the risk of prolonging the state of lack of full empowerment.

Mr. Chulkov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I should like at the outset to take this opportunity to express once again, on behalf of the Russian delegation, our deep condolences to the peoples of Pakistan, India and Afghanistan affected by the catastrophic earthquake of 8 October. We would also like to express our solidarity with the Governments of those countries. Along with a number of other countries, the Russian Federation responded to the tragedy without delay by sending search and rescue teams, doctors, special equipment, and humanitarian aid to the areas of disaster.

Turning now to the agenda items under discussion today, I should like to say, first of all, that the Russian Federation notes with satisfaction the progress made in recent years towards settling conflicts in Africa, especially in Sierra Leone, Burundi, Sudan, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. At the same time, the general situation on the continent is still far from stable. We consider the strengthening of stability in Africa to be a priority for the international community in order to build, under the auspices of the United Nations, a global system to counter the threats and challenges of the modern world. We will not achieve the harmonious and sustainable development of international relations if the African continent remains a hotbed of instability.

We stand for close interaction between the United Nations, African regional and subregional entities and individual States so as to develop harmonized and integrated approaches to the settlement of conflicts in the region, which should be based on predominance of political and diplomatic methods and strict compliance with the peacekeeping norms and principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations. This has been confirmed by the adoption at the 14 September Security Council summit of Council resolution 1625 (2005), on strengthening the effectiveness of the Security Council's role in conflict prevention, particularly in Africa, sponsored by the Group of African States.

In keeping with its status as a permanent member of the Security Council, Russia has been making a significant contribution to peacekeeping activities on the continent, including the development of a strategy for settling specific armed conflicts and defining the mandates of the relevant peacekeeping operations within the Security Council. Russian military personnel and law-enforcement officers — as of now totalling some 220 persons — are involved in almost all United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa.

Russia is also conducting training for African peacekeepers. At present, we are considering the possibility of broadening our cooperation in this area with the African countries. We intend to continue to promote stability in Africa in every possible way and to assist African countries in building their own anti-crisis capacity.

We support the new approach in United Nations peacekeeping practice of ensuring close interaction among the United Nations missions deployed in neighbouring African States. It is of critical importance that this be well coordinated. Here, however, we should be particularly careful: coordinated activities of the United Nations forces should be sanctioned of the Security Council and be based on the principles of full respect for the sovereignty of individual States and the consent of the troop-contributing countries; they should not go beyond the mandates defined for each individual mission.

In the context of the efforts to stabilize post-conflict situations in Africa, we recognize the considerable potential of the future Peacebuilding Commission. We hope that Member States will swiftly reach agreement on all the issues related to its activities. We are convinced that, above all, active participation of the African States themselves is required to ensure a more durable peace on the continent. It is important to take measures against illegal armed groups; to strengthen good-neighbourly relations; to enhance cooperation on ensuring the security of borders and their impenetrability with respect to the spilling over of conflicts, arms and mercenaries; and to eradicate mass violations of international humanitarian law and eliminate impunity for crimes against humanity. We appreciate the efforts made by the African community in this area, and we welcome the vigorous activities of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, including those aimed at establishing an African standby force.

The Russian Federation attaches great importance to international cooperation in promoting the development of African countries, which we view through the prism of their achieving the Millennium Development Goals through implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). We are pleased to note that the work within the social and economic dimensions of NEPAD is gathering pace, as demonstrated by the fruitful ongoing efforts made by African countries to develop infrastructure, modernize agriculture and education and fight the spread of infectious diseases. Our country, a responsible member of the international community, is contributing to speeding those processes by acting simultaneously on several tracks.

As a member of the Group of Eight, Russia actively participates in the implementation of the Group's Africa Action Plan, which aims at promoting work within NEPAD, and Russia continues to pay great attention to resolving urgent issues of the social and economic development of the African continent.

Debt relief for the countries of the region remains a major focus of our assistance to Africa, including through the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative. So far, Russia has cancelled or pledged to cancel $11.3 billion of the debt of African countries, including more then $2 billion through the HIPC Initiative. In 2003-2004, Russia contributed an additional $10 million to the Initiative Trust Fund. For 2005-2006, it decided to pay an additional $15 million to the Fund, and the first instalment — $5 million — has already been transferred.

In the context of the Paris Club, Russia has pledged to cancel more than $1 billion of the debt of Ethiopia. We continue our work on settling the debt of African countries on a bilateral basis. Russia has signed relevant agreements with Sao Tome and Principe, Burundi and Nigeria and has held negotiations with Zambia, Angola, Ethiopia, the Republic of the Congo and Chad.

Russia has decided to contribute approximately $60 million to the 14th Replenishment of the International Development Association for 2006-2014. Sub-Saharan African countries will receive some 49 per cent of that amount.

Our country continues to provide a preferential customs tariff regime for goods produced in African countries. That promotes the expansion of our trade

with African countries, which totalled $638 million in the first nine months of 2004, an increase of approximately 25 per cent over the same period in 2003.

We believe that investment in human resources is an important element of aid to the continent. That is why we assist African countries in the training of their national staff. Every year, Russia provides over 700 State-funded scholarships.

Russia has become a more active donor country in providing emergency humanitarian aid. In 2004, we provided bilateral humanitarian aid to Morocco and Mali. Our partnerships with multilateral donors, primarily the World Food Programme, is developing vigorously. Starting this year, Russia will make regular contributions to the Programme's humanitarian activities.

We are aware of the urgency of the problems related to the spread of malaria in Africa. We approach the issue not only from the medical point of view but also from the standpoint of its negative impact on the social and economic development of the continent. That is why we favour stepping up international efforts agreed within the United Nations to reduce the spread of that pandemic in Africa.

In accordance with that position, we have made multifaceted health care aid to the continent an essential component of our assistance. In addition to our previous commitments to make voluntary contributions of $20 million to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the Government of the Russian Federation has decided to double that sum by raising our consolidated payment to $40 million by 2008. So far, we have transferred $15 million of that amount to the Fund. This year, we completed payment of the $8 million that we pledged to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative that in 2003-2004.

Many experts acknowledge that Africa may not achieve its development goals by 2015. At the same time, the international community has done a great deal this year to show its solidarity with the continent. Many countries have made serious commitments to provide assistance to the continent. The time has come to act on those promises. The Russian Federation, for its part, intends to help fulfil that task in every possible way.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his third consolidated report on progress in implementation and international support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (A/60/178) and the Report of the Secretary-General's Advisory Panel on International Support for NEPAD (A/60/85).

We support the statement made by Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Africa is part of our world, globalization having closely linked all five continents. Global development cannot be achieved without Africa's prosperity. From the Millennium Declaration and NEPAD to the recent 2005 summit, attention to Africa is being reflected in new actions.

We are pleased to note that the African countries have made enormous efforts to implement NEPAD. They have adopted positive measures in the areas of infrastructure, information and communication technologies, public health, education, the environment, tourism, agriculture, science and technology and industrialization. We highly appreciate all those endeavours. Over the past year, the international community's attention and assistance to Africa's development have increased. Some developed countries have made new commitments in terms of official development assistance to Africa and debt relief. The developing countries have also made assistance to Africa an important part of South-South cooperation. All that shows that we have taken a major step to promote Africa's development.

However, as noted in the report, implementing NEPAD remains a complex and painstaking process. Aside from international support and the efforts of the African countries themselves, we need to make far greater efforts for the African continent, where help is needed in all undertakings. African countries need to further strengthen their efforts to implement national development strategies. And the international community should take effective measures of all kinds to assist and support African countries, including a substantial increase in aid. In this respect, we endorse the useful recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General.

As regards future international support to Africa in implementing NEPAD, the Chinese delegation wishes to emphasize the following points.

First, aid pledges should be fulfilled at an early date. During this year's summit, it was reiterated by all participants that the complexity of Africa's development has become a poverty trap that cannot be broken by Africa alone. Only by rendering huge and diversified international support can we help Africa to escape its predicament. Whether because of historical obligations or deficiencies in the current international economic order, the developed countries have responsibilities that they cannot shirk. We commend the pledges made by the European Union, the G-8 and other major developed countries to increase official development assistance to Africa and debt relief. But, this only marks the first step. In their quest to reach the MDGs, the African countries and peoples are racing against time. We hope that the developed countries will display the same sense of urgency and fulfil their pledges at an early date so as to help African countries to solve urgent problems and build capacities for self-development.

Secondly, vigorous efforts should be made to improve monitoring. Africa's own efforts and international support are the two major pillars of NEPAD. African countries have established a peer review mechanism to conduct regular evaluation of their own efforts. To ensure more real results from international support, it is necessary to have corresponding mechanisms to monitor implementation so as to produce more accurate and detailed reports and relevant recommendations on progress achieved with international support.

Thirdly, country ownership should be respected. The international community, in offering aid to Africa, should trust the wisdom of African Governments and peoples and respect their choice of development path, so as to ensure the ownership, leadership and full policy space of the recipient countries. This not only reflects the spirit of equality and mutual respect but is also an important way to give play to Africa's creativity and tap its potential.

Fourthly, South-South cooperation should be expanded further. In the process of development, the developing countries have always understood and supported each other. Under the current circumstances, South-South cooperation, based on marked progress already achieved, will have even greater prospects. We are in favour of continued efforts to explore new ways for South-South cooperation, exchange views, learn from each other and strengthen trade, investment and technical cooperation, thus enhancing Africa's development.

Whether it is in the past struggle for national independence and liberation or in the present pursuit of peace and development, the Chinese people have always stood firmly with the fraternal people of Africa. It is an important component of China's foreign policy to consolidate and develop friendly relations and cooperate with African countries, support and assist African countries and peoples in economic development and social progress.

As an important step to reinforce South-South cooperation, China and African countries established the China-Africa Cooperation Forum in 2000, which laid down a comprehensive and detailed plan for China-Africa cooperation. Its key areas are generally identical with the priority areas of NEPAD.

In 2004, the Chinese Government signed loan agreements with 43 African countries, focusing on agricultural development, infrastructure, human resources training, medical care and public health. On 1 January 2005, China instituted zero tariffs on some commodities from the 25 least-developed countries in Africa, covering 190 tariff lines. In 2004, China's direct investment in Africa reached $135 million, a record high for China's annual direct investment in Africa.

At the separate meeting on financing for development during this year's summit, President Hu Jintao announced five new measures for strengthening South-South cooperation, including increased aid to developing countries for prevention and treatment of malaria and other infectious diseases, debt cancellation for the highly indebted poor countries, the wide-range three-year training programme for 30,000 trainees from developing countries and the three-year $10 billion preferential loan programme for developing countries. The Chinese Government is ready to implement the relevant programmes through the China-Africa Cooperation Forum and other cooperation channels so as to support Africa in enhancing development and implementing NEPAD.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): My delegation wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his reports on the items we are discussing today. My delegation also wishes to associate itself with the statements made by Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, by Namibia on behalf of the African Union and by

Lesotho on behalf of the Southern African Development Community.

We are pleased that the Secretary-General has acknowledged in his report on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) that there has been greater international response in support of Africa's development, including the mobilization of international public opinion. At the same time, the Secretary-General concludes that much more needs to be done and that, therefore, international cooperation in support of NEPAD needs to be enhanced.

Through NEPAD, African leaders have not only taken ownership and leadership of the continent's socio-economic renewal agenda but they have also transformed the content of the development agenda and are making progress in changing the international context as well. The New Partnership is now just four years old. The key principles of NEPAD remain African ownership in the promotion of socio-economic development, the advancement of democracy, promotion of human rights and good governance.

Through NEPAD, African leaders have created a comprehensive and holistic approach to development. The NEPAD policies and priorities have resulted in an internationally agreed framework for Africa's development.

The reports and recent indications show that implementation of NEPAD programmes is poised to accelerate in the coming years. As we heard today from many speakers, preparations and consultations — for example for the rollout of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme — have been concluded. African subregional communities and African Governments have already identified high priority projects and early actions that need to be undertaken. African Governments have also committed themselves to increasing national budget allocations for agriculture to 10 per cent per annum over the next five years. Good progress is also being made in the implementation of other NEPAD programmes, including health, information and communications technologies, education, energy, environment, science and technology and gender issues.

The peer review process, as agreed by Africans, has been designed by Africans themselves and is therefore, also African owned. Its principles have their roots in African traditions and processes that may not necessarily translate easily to other situations. The African Peer Review Mechanism enables each African country to assess the progress it is making towards the achievement of Africa's shared goals. This is a country review rather than merely a review of Government performance. It takes into account the fact that national development in any country is driven by a multiplicity of social forces.

The African Peer Mechanism is, therefore, enabling rather than prescriptive, specifying objectives and standards and providing indicative definitions of criteria and examples of indicators so as to ensure broad coherence at the country level and uniformity at the continental level.

At the end of September 2005, South Africa held a two-day national consultative conference, where delegates from government, business, trade unions, academia and the entire spectrum of civil society launched the South African peer review process. Consistent with our Government's commitment to a people-driven process of progressive change, South Africa supports the inclusive approach of the conclusions of the peer review process. This is especially important, given that peer review will conclude with a programme of action to address whatever shortfalls are identified by the review. In this context, our Government believes that it is essential that all South Africans should own this programme of action and work towards implementing it.

This year marks an important milestone in the African continent's efforts to combat malaria. Five years ago, African heads of State and Government signed the Abuja Declaration and Framework for Action for the Fight Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Diseases, which committed their countries to reaching specific targets on malaria prevention and control by 2005. Although much progress is being made in the fight against malaria, major interventions are still needed. If uncontrolled, malaria will continue to be a major economic burden on African economies. Statistics already show that in one year malaria has claimed the lives of 1 million people worldwide, 90 per cent of whom have been from Africa. Combating malaria is possible only if there is concerted and coordinated action among all stakeholders.

My delegation concurs with the Secretary-General's progress report on "Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and

promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" (A/60/182) that the African Union has made substantial progress in conflict prevention on the continent. One of the key changes is the way in which Africa is leading in the resolution of conflicts and managing peacebuilding by providing strong leadership from African countries themselves.

The African Union has the primary responsibility for the peace and security architecture on the continent, primarily through the African Union's Peace and Security Council. As the Secretary-General's report outlined, socio-economic development is essential to peace and security, and therefore NEPAD's role in peace and security relates to post-conflict reconstruction and to mobilization of the necessary resources. In that context, Africa is finalizing an African Post-Conflict Reconstruction Policy Framework aimed at enhancing the capacities of all internal actors. Detailed strategies for post-conflict reconstruction have been developed in consultation with African experts and other development partners.

My delegation also concurs with the Secretary-General's reports that the main challenge remaining for the development of Africa is the implementation of a truly global and equitable partnership through the honouring of the international community's commitments. It is therefore clear that despite all the actions and commitments of African countries and institutions themselves, the main constraint remains the lack of adequate resources for implementation.

In that regard, the global partnership for Africa's development needs to change, among other things, by means of the manner in which the multilateral development financing institutions support infrastructure development in Africa. It is also critical that they create special mechanisms for the financing of subregional infrastructure projects.

Secondly, the international community should translate promises into concrete actions, especially with regard to the promised significant increases in development assistance flows and the harmonization and simplification of aid procedures. Our calculations indicate that pledges made, if fulfilled, would increase flows of official development assistance to Africa to $44 billion in 2010 and to $61 billion in 2015. Although that would be a significant increase, it would still fall short of the amount required to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Thirdly, it is important to address the impediments to the effectiveness of development assistance. We acknowledge that there is now a broad consensus that such assistance has been compromised by a number of factors that have fuelled the perception that Africa lacks the capacity to absorb and effectively use increased funds. In reality, the problem is that funding has often been provided piecemeal by individual donors for single short-term programmes that carry heavy transaction costs and often require the creation of parallel infrastructures.

Fourthly, the debt cancellation movement — which began after exhaustive advocacy on the part of African leaders and their partners at the Group of Eight summit and which was recently confirmed at the annual board meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund — can only be applauded, and we hope it will be speedily implemented. NEPAD will monitor the implementation of the initiative and continue to call for the extension of debt relief to all least developed countries in Africa and for similar bold actions with regard to the trade-distorting agricultural subsidies of developed countries.

The lack of concrete and sufficiently quantified and detailed African development strategies and action plans can no longer be cited as a reason for lack of progress in a real partnership between Africa and the international community. Africa is doing its part, and it is now up to our international partners to join in that true partnership so that the lives of ordinary African people can be improved.

In conclusion, South Africa calls on the international community to implement, in 2006, a concrete programme of action, as called for in the Millennium Declaration and in the outcome document (resolution 60/1) of the 2005 world summit, so that Africa can be assisted in achieving the MDGs by 2015.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.